



Viral Hepatitis Risks:

- ⇒ Having your blood or body fluids come in contact with infected blood or body fluids (each virus differs).
- ⇒ Sharing personal items that may have blood on them (toothbrushes, razors or nail clippers).
- ⇒ Sharing any equipment used for any body piercings.
- ⇒ Getting a tattoo without correct infection control procedures.
- ⇒ Sharing needles for drug use or for any reason, even once and even if it was a long time ago.
- ⇒ Sharing other drug use equipment (straws, cottons or cookers).
- ⇒ Having unprotected sex with someone with unknown infection status or someone who has the virus.

The hepatitis virus can survive (on surfaces in dried blood) outside the body for days.

For more information about Hepatitis

Call your health care provider,
your local health department,
or contact



at

www.health.mo.gov/hepatitisc
www.cdc.gov

Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services
Section for Disease Prevention
P.O. Box 570

Jefferson City, MO 65102-0570

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Teens And Hepatitis

Hepatitis Risks

Hey Teens...

What do drugs, unprotected sex, tattoos and body piercings have in common?

What You Need to Know

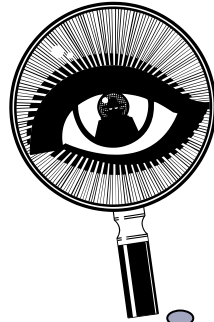
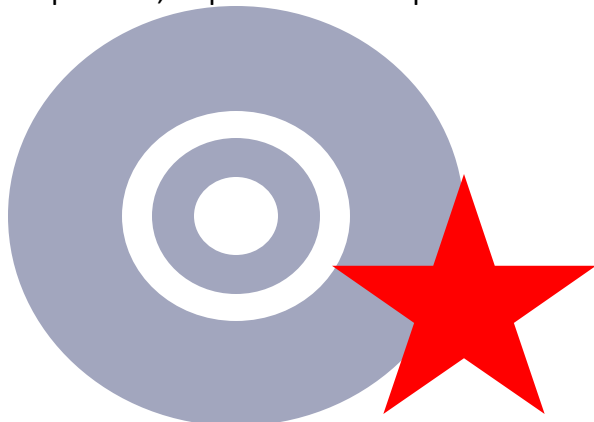
TEENS and HEPATITIS

What do drugs, unprotected sex, tattoos and body piercings have in common?

We know... they are all things that your parents might lecture you about avoiding, right? Maybe... but they also have another connection. They all have risks for transmitting HEPATITIS viruses.

What is Hepatitis?

The word hepatitis means “inflammation of the liver.” The liver is one of the body’s powerhouses. It helps process nutrients and metabolizes medication, it also helps clear the body of toxic waste products. Sometimes the liver can become inflamed from a virus, it is then called viral hepatitis. Prolonged inflammation can lead to liver damage and even cancer. In the U.S., the three most common hepatitis viruses are Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Hepatitis C.



- ⇒ You cannot tell by looking if someone has hepatitis.
- ⇒ A lot of times hepatitis does not have symptoms.
- ⇒ Anyone can get hepatitis at any age.

Why risk it?

How are these viruses passed along?

Hepatitis A is found in the **feces** (poop) of an infected person. It is usually passed along in food from poor infection control/ handwashing. The virus can make you feel sick but there is no treatment and the virus will go away on it’s own.

Hepatitis B is found in **blood and body fluids** (semen and vaginal fluids) of an infected person. The virus may not make you feel sick but can become a chronic lifelong infection.

Hepatitis C is found in the **blood** of an infected person. The virus may not make you feel sick but can become a chronic lifelong infection.



The Hepatitis B and C viruses can survive for days outside the body.

Infected blood can live on surfaces including needles, tattoo equipment, razors, toothbrushes and inside syringes.

Hepatitis is 10-100 times more infectious than HIV.

What can you do to be safe?

First...There are vaccines available for Hepatitis A and Hepatitis B. Make sure you get them.

Second...You cannot get Hepatitis from casual contact (hand holding or kissing).

Third...Make sure you see the list of risks on the other side.

